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GLENDALE EARNS PRESTIGIOUS NATIONAL PARKS AND RECREATION AGENCY ACCREDITATION

GLENDALE, Ariz. – On Oct. 13, the Glendale Parks and Recreation Department became the 80th agency in the country and internationally to have earned the national agency accreditation from the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA).

The process of accreditation was extensive and took approximately two years to accomplish. The agency accreditation process is a systematic evaluation of the agency's management and operational business practices in 10 major categories of 155 best practice standards. There are less than 100 agencies throughout the United States and internationally that have successfully completed the accreditation process.

The award was announced at the National Recreation and Park Association's (NRPA) Annual Conference in Salt Lake City, Utah. NRPA is the national professional organization that provides education, advocacy and networking opportunities for over 22,000 national and international park and recreation professionals and citizen volunteers.

Parks and Recreation Director Becky Benná stated, "This was truly a team effort by staff and the other City departments. Participating in the two-year operations assessment was the most important part of the process, and to meet 100% of the standards demonstrates the outstanding capabilities of city staff. The national accreditation is one of the most prestigious honors that can be bestowed on a parks and recreation system."

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According to NRPA, nearly 200 million people use local parks and recreation services annually to enhance their physical and social wellbeing. They seek the highest quality of park and recreation experiences. Many benefits result for the community and the organization of parks and recreation departments that complete the agency accreditation process. Some of those include:

- Requires an extensive self-evaluation of the agency's business practices.
- Identifies areas for improvement by comparing an agency against national standards of best practices.
- Enhances staff teamwork and pride by engaging all staff in the department as well as other departments and organizations in the process.
- Creates an environment for regular reviews of operations, policies, and procedures and promotes continual improvements.
- Assures there are business practices to offer high quality customer services.
- Provides external validation that the agency meets national standards.
- Enhances the community's reputation in offering nationally accredited park and recreation programs and services.

After participating in a review hearing with the Commission on Oct.13, 2009, Glendale Parks and Recreation staff and the Community Services Deputy City Manager were notified that the department not only received accreditation, but it also met 100% of the 155 standards.

CAPRA consists of 13 professional and academia representatives from the National Recreation and Park Association, American Academy for Park & Recreation Administration, National Association of County Park and Recreation Officials, International City/Council Management Association, American Association for Physical Activity and Recreation, Council of State Executive Directors and Armed Forces Recreation Society.

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